

Questions relating to the 5 May Sources Sought Synopsis

INDUSTRY QUESTION

Do you envision that the system program definition phase will lead directly into the TSPR downselect?

GOVERNMENT ANSWER

The government intends to conduct another acquisition towards the completion of this one. This instant acquisition is for system program definition and risk reduction (SPD&RR); the next one will be for Engineering and Manufacturing Development/Production (EMD/Prod). The timing of the next acquisition (EMD/Prod) will be coordinated with our need to support a Milestone II/III decision. It is our desire that the selected contractors for the SPD&RR contracts will be competitors for the EMD/Prod contract.

INDUSTRY QUESTION

A secondary question is how or if this plays into the Milestone II process?

GOVERNMENT ANSWER

The data generated by the SPD&RR contracts, other government projects, and the proposals for the EMD/Prod contracts will provide the basis for determining whether the NPOESS program obtains a favorable Milestone II/III decision and is allowed to proceed beyond Phase I development. The work being contracted for in the SPD&RR acquisition is the foundation for selecting the final prime contractor for the total NPOESS system. This selection will be made following the Milestone II/III decision.

INDUSTRY QUESTION

Are you [the Government] approaching this acquisition as a small business set-aside?

GOVERNMENT ANSWER

It is premature to answer that question definitively—the results of the sources sought synopsis will help us make that decision.

INDUSTRY QUESTION

Response Delivery Requirements - Format specifications (e.g., font type and size, line spacing, margins): Government specification or contractor discretion? - Hard copy, electronic, or both? - If electronic: - Preferred software (e.g., Word v.6.0, PDF)? - E-mail address for the PCO Mr. John Inman

GOVERNMENT ANSWER

We rely on contractor discretion in selecting font type and size. We hope the submissions will be easily readable. We prefer electronic submission in pdf format as described in the synopsis amendment that appeared in the CBD Online (<http://cdbnet.access.gpo.gov>) on 10 May 1999. The contracting officer's e-mail address is <jinman@ipo.noaa.gov>.

INDUSTRY QUESTION

White Paper Recommendations - In the CBD announcement the page allocation for the white papers is stated as, "(max. 4 pages, please)". Could you please clarify whether this 4 page limit is: - the maximum for ALL recommendations (4 pages total)? - per RFP and SOO topic/recommendations (8 pages total)? - per the three topics listed in the CBD announcement: acquisition philosophy, evaluation criteria, System Program Definition deliverables or outcomes (12 pages total)? - per topic (unlimited page total)?

GOVERNMENT ANSWER

The page limit is imposed for efficiency's sake— we desire top-level helpful information and industry insight. We expect responders to limit their capabilities/experience brief to eight pages and their white paper to four pages, for a total of twelve pages, period. We hope industry will understand that this is not the one-and-only opportunity to provide input into the course of the acquisition— we still anticipate releasing a draft RFP before the final RFP and holding a pre-solicitation or pre-proposal conference and one-on-ones with interested firms.

INDUSTRY QUESTION

System Program Definition Contract Parameters - To help ensure our recommendations are consistent with the IPO's intent for this phase of the program, any information you could provide on the following three subtopics would be extremely useful: - Does the IPO still intend to conduct the System Program Definition Contract in two steps or phases: preliminary architecture definition (functional definition) followed by a phase of similar duration where a physical architecture is defined? In one model discussed the IPO would define the Government-preferred architecture based on the input of the two competing teams at the end of the functional definition phase. This architecture would form the basis for the second phase's physical definition work. Is this the IPO's current model? - Expected contract duration - Expected funding-level by fiscal year

GOVERNMENT ANSWER

We do have an idea of the direction and speed we might take with this acquisition, but we most sincerely desire to obtain industry input into their ideas of the direction and speed we ought to take. Thus, we don't want industry to tell us what they think we want to hear. The notion of the two steps as described in the question has been discussed, and if a responder thinks the two phase approach is a good idea, that responder might elaborate on that approach in its white paper. After receiving and analyzing the inputs from industry, we will release a draft RFP which will more fully describe the Government's anticipated approach, and industry will have an opportunity to comment on that approach before release of the final RFP.

INDUSTRY QUESTION

When do we contemplate releasing the final RFP?

GOVERNMENT ANSWER

We anticipate releasing the draft RFP on or about June 23, 1999. We're uncertain about the final RFP, but we envision sometime in August or September.
